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REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 27, 2005, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 1-14 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 5, and 11 have been amended. Claims 15-18 have been added. As a result, claims 1-18 are pending for examination with claims 1, 11, and 17 being independent. The application is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in objected claims 8 and 9. All of the limitations of canceled claim 8 and its base claim 1 have been included in newly added claim 17. Claim 18 corresponds to claim 9. Thus, claims 17 and 18 should be allowable.

Objections to the Specification

The Office Action has objected to the title of the application for not being descriptive with respect to the claimed invention. Applicants have amended the title, based on the examiner's suggestion modified to more closely parallel claim 1, to "A Method for Inspecting a Channel Using a Flexible Sensor." Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under U.S.C. § 102 and U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bender, U.S. Patent No. 2,622,125 (Bender). The Office Action also rejects claims 5-7 and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bender. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Bender illustrates an expansible coil for testing materials of irregular internal contours (Col. 1, lines 1-4). The device described by Bender, shown in Figure 1, includes a testing unit 12 comprising an inflatable bladder 13. In operation, the testing unit is placed in a pipe 10 with the bladder deflated and passed through an upset portion 11, or larger opening, of the pipe. Once the

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testing unit is in the upset portion of the pipe, the bladder is then inflated and the testing device is moved along the pipe by means of a cord or rod (Col. 3, lines 4-18).

Although Bender uses this term "opening" with respect to the upset portion 11, it is not an end opening as shown in Figs 10 and 11 of this application and now explicitly claimed. Amended claim 1 requires "measuring the sensor response as the sensor is moved along the channel and through an end opening of the channel." Bender does not teach or suggest measuring the sensor response while the sensor is moving through an end opening. Nowhere in Bender is it mentioned that testing is performed, with the sensing device being inflated, while the sensor is moved along and through an end opening. In fact, Bender explicitly states that the testing unit "is inserted and withdrawn in a deflated position" (column 2, lines 22-24). Thus, Bender fails to teach all of the limitations required by amended claim 1, and claim 1 patentably distinguishes from Bender. Claims 2-7 and 10 depend from claim 1 and are patentably distinct for at least the same reasons.

As should be appreciated from the above discussion relating to claim 1, claim 11 also patentably distinguishes from Bender. Claims 12-16 depend from claim 11 and are patentably distinct for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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